

Atherly House  
406 West Main Street, northwest corner  
of West Main and Church Streets  
Ashville  
Chautauqua County  
New York

HABS No. NY-5607

HABS  
NY

7-ASHV,

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NY-5607

## ATHERLY HOUSE

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NY  
7-ASHV, 1-

Location: 406 West Main Street, northwest corner of West Main and Church Streets, Ashville, Chautauqua County, New York

Present Owner: Carl Swanson

Present Occupant: Carl Swanson and renters

Present Use: The house is divided into two apartments. The owner lives in the first-floor apartment.

Statement of Significance: The elaborate pierced and sawn work of the exterior detailing makes the Atherly House an unusual and inventive example of the "carpenter Gothic" style. The triple-arch treatment of the porticoes and porches suggests a Moorish influence.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1836.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners:

1836	Amariah Atherly
1864	Rollin D. Atherly, by will from Amariah Atherly
c. 1869	Eliza Atherly, by will from Rollin D. Atherly
c. 1870	Daniel Williams, followed by Addie and Earl Williams
1881	Josephus Clark
1888	James and Addie Campbell
1921	Leon and Bertha L. Bush
1952	Carl B. Swanson
4. Builder or contractor: Unknown.
5. Original plans: None known.
6. Alterations and additions: Balustrades topping the roof and cupola as shown in a drawing of the house in the 1881

The above information is taken from Title Search No. 166684, in the possession of Carl B. Swanson.

Chautauqua County Atlas, have been removed. An east-west addition has been attached to the single-story service wing.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Amariah Atherly was one of the earliest settlers in Ashville. He was the owner of the Rock Oil Refinery. An adjoining cemetery was part of the Atherly estate. A monument in the middle of this family burying ground contains an inscription: "Erected as a family monument A.D. 1850... a legacy of D.L. Atherly." DeWitt Atherly is listed in the Civil War Honor Roll.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: A map of Chautauqua County published in 1854 has a drawing of the house in the margin.

2. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources: None known.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Chautauqua County map. 1854.

Darrow, Floyd L. History of the Town of North Harmony.  
Book I. North Harmony, N. Y.: Town Board, 1953.

Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Chautauqua, N. Y. New York: F. W. Beers and Co., 1881.

c. Likely sources not yet investigated: None known.

Prepared by Jewel H. Conover, Professor  
New York State University  
at Fredonia  
January 15, 1965

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This house contains fine examples of decoration which are local interpretations of architectural forms perhaps seen in pattern books or drawings.

2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The main two-story portion is thirty-six feet square (three bays by three bays) and has two-story projections, approximately nine feet by sixteen feet, on the east, west, and south sides; an L-shaped, two-story wing on the north side is approximately twenty-five feet long.
2. Foundations: Fieldstone.
3. Wall construction: Exterior clapboards are painted white. The original color appears to have been fawn or drab. The exterior of the main block enclosed by porches has flush siding.
4. Structural system, framing: Wooden studs, joists, and rafters.
5. Porches, stoops, and bulkheads: The two-story east and west porches present a gabled pediment with an applied band of sawnwork in the shape of an inflected arch. Four piers with open sawnwork support an inflected center arch and two trefoil side arches. All wooden arches are pierced. The north and south sides of the porches are finished with trefoil arches which have an applied arched band of sawnwork. The interior porch roofs are boxed, following the shape of the inflected arch. The porch floors rise two steps above ground level. Each floor of the two-story south porch has the same triple-arch composition as the east and west porches. Here the arches are boxed and topped by a band of sawnwork. The square corner piers, the only supporting members, are pierced with a vertical floral design. The lower level of this porch is three steps above the flagstone walk. The upper level is boxed with a solid wooden panel which has an applied decoration of angled moldings. The top of the rail is finished with solid half circles. A modern addition of a two-inch by four-inch railing has been placed between the enlarged, decorated plinth blocks. A bulkhead is located to the south of the west porch. An undecorated recessed porch is located in the east side of the ell.
6. Chimneys: One brick chimney pierces the cupola; the other is centered in the north-south axis of the ell.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways: Three main entrances which give access to

the house from the three porches have single-leaf, six-panel doors. These doorways are without moldings or casings. Two doorways located in the recess of the east side of the ell open into the main block and the ell.

- b. Windows: The windows in the main block are double hung with six-over-six-light sashes. A second-floor circular light with radiating muntins is located in the main block beneath the arches of the east and west two-story porches. The ell has double-hung windows with four-over-four-light and six-over-six-light sashes. There are small horizontal casement windows facing south in the second story of the ell.
8. Roof: The hipped roof of the main block and the flat gabled roof of the wing are covered with asphalt shingles. The flat-board cornices edge the narrow overhanging eaves. A variety of sawn tracery designs finish all the cornices. It is important to note that there is no repetition in the designs except in the treatment of the gables of the east and west porches. It has been suggested that since the tracery also appears on the wing, this was an earlier structure incorporated into the building now standing. A square cupola with hipped roof and flush-board surfaces is centered above the main block. A three-lobed, arched window is centered in each of three sides--the south, the east, and the west. A rectangular window is located on the north side. Each side has an elaborately sawn three-lobed banding which extends from the lower corners of the cupola and arches over the windows. The narrow flat cornice is edged with elaborate sawnwork of running "s" scrolls and drop trefoils. An ornament has been removed from the top of the cupola. It has been retained by the owner.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The house has been converted into a two-family dwelling. The original floor plan thus has been modified.
2. Stairways: An open-string, oval-corner stair with landing has turned balusters and newel post, a molded hand-rail, and sawn scroll brackets.
3. Flooring: All floors are modern.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All painted and papered walls and ceilings are modern. The first floor of the main

block has flat backband molding as trim. The remainder of the wooden trim is flat.

5. Doorways and doors: Six-panel wooden doors with little or no framing are used throughout.
6. Special decorative features: One closed-up fireplace has an exposed simple mantel shelf.
7. Hardware: None of note.
8. Lighting: All fixtures are modern electric.
9. Heating: A modern furnace and a wall space heater have been installed.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces east, overlooking the junction of the main street and a dirt street in a small farming community.
2. Outbuildings: No original structures remain. The present owner removed a decaying lattice pergola connecting the house with a privy, c. 1964

Prepared by Susan R. Slade  
September 1973

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This photo-data book was prepared as part of a 1964-65 recording project in cooperation with the Buffalo-Western New York Chapter of AIA, Olaf William Shelgren (at that time Chairman of the Chapter's Preservation Committee), and Olaf William Shelgren, Jr.--both of the firm Shelgren, Patterson and Marzec. Photographs were taken in May 1965 by Jack E. Boucher, HABS staff photographer. Under the direction of John C. Poppeliers, Chief, HABS, an editorial project was undertaken in September 1973, by Susan R. Slade, architectural historian.